

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA: TORRENTIAL RAINS AND FLOODS

12 August 2007

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 186 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 01/2007) is being issued for information only. The Federation welcomes financial support to replenish disaster preparedness stock as per the 2007 portion of the DPRK annual disaster management programme (the latest programme update of the 2006-2007 appeal that DPRK is linked to is available on the Federation website).

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

The Situation

Intermittent rains which started 5 August has caused serious flooding in many parts of the country, compounding the difficulties normally anticipated in the annual rainy season of July and August. Between 7 to 9 August, North Hwanghae, South Hwanghae, Kangwon and South Phyongan provinces were subjected to severe downpours. The incessant rains have affected the lives and livelihood of the people living in these areas.

People have been evacuated and brought to safety. The Red Cross branches have supported the local authorities' efforts to do this successfully. The county people's committee is appealing to cooperative farms to donate emergency food for homeless people. This is in the face of Typhoon No. 7, which is expected to hit the eastern and western coastal area Monday evening, 13 August. Warnings of high tides have been issued on national television. Indeed, weather forecasts predict continued heavy rains until 17 August.

National assessments are ongoing, coordinated by the National Disaster Coordination Commission led by the Cabinet. The main response is carried out by the local authorities and the army is starting to repair roads, bridges and communication systems. The DPRK Red Cross is a member of the coordinating commission and currently, is in touch with Red Cross branches to obtain further information. However, information collection is currently hampered by a break down of telephone connections.

In the capital Pyongyang, the water level in the Taedong River has risen to serious levels. Means to control the water levels have been undertaken by operating the west sea barrage.

The record of last week's precipitation is documented in the table below:

Figure 1: A record of precipitation for the past week

Province	City/County	Date (7-9)/ mm	Date (10-11) /mm
Pyongyang			226
North Hwanghae	Koksan	431	
	Singye		202
	Sinphyong		152
South Phyongan	Pyongsong	193	329
	Tokchon	145	349
	Maengsan		361
	Pukchang		323
	Yangdok	309	185
	Sunchon		302
	Pyongwon		226
	Songchon		213
	Eunsan		196
Kangwon	Hoeyang	378	236
	Bopdong	209	
	Pyonggang		396
	Namgang		176
North Phongan	Hyangsan		271
	Kujang		268

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

On 9 August, the DPRK Red Cross Society dispatched headquarters and provincial branch staff to the affected areas to conduct field damage assessments. The Red Cross emergency operations room is on a 24 hour alert. The disaster management director and staff are carrying out a field assessment in south Hwanghae province. The disaster management officer of the International Federation visited Koksan and Sinphyong counties in North Hwanghae province on 10 August to assess and report on the current situation.

Report from Koksan county



Affected apartment block in Koksan (International Federation/Aug 2007)

The Red Cross branch chief and vice chairman of the county people's committee reported in a meeting with the Federation disaster management officer that approximately 435 mm of heavy rain poured down for six hours (from 11 p.m on the 7th until 4 a.m on 8 August).

According to the survey of the damage, 298 families have lost their houses and all personal property and over 1,005 houses have been partially damaged and submerged. Five people are reported missing and have not yet been accounted for. Three main bridges were broken, while high voltage power and telephone line towers had collapsed. In addition, a water reservoir with a storage capacity of 120 *chongmi* (1.2 million m³) for irrigation threatened to overflow. The county authorities organized the evacuation of people from

their homes at midnight. People who were evacuated to the nearby mountains were later mobilized to repair damaged river dams to prevent secondary flooding since it was still raining.

The county authority is taking necessary measures to allow those left homeless to be housed with others, while providing public buildings for temporary shelter.

Report Sinphyong county

The county has so far recorded no casualties, but 174 houses that were scattered and located at the bottom of the mountains were completely destroyed, leaving 202 families homeless. The County Red Cross branch, which had experienced a similar flooding in July of last year, was able to quickly mobilize and deploy 54 Red Cross volunteers in the affected communities. Some of the homeless have been moved to public buildings which are used as temporary shelters, while others are sharing houses with people who have not yet been affected.



Road destruction in Sinphyong area (International Federation/Aug 2007)

Initial Red Cross Action taken

The Federation and the DPRK Red Cross is responding to the needs of the homeless people in Koksan and Sinphyong county. This was done initially by releasing pre-stocked family kits to some 500 families consisting of tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets, water containers and water purification tablets. The Red Cross action will be adjusted according to the developing needs.

The Federation and the DPRK Red Cross have daily coordinating meetings about the unfolding situation and updates will be provided. For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The Federation's Global Agenda

The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a Global Agenda, which sets out **four broad goals** to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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